how, by the same peculiarity of our nature, fortune and utility must influence the moral judgments. The fairer features of actions useful to ourselves or others, these, and these alone, are presented to the mind, which proceeds in consequence to applaud the actions. Deeds which are in themselves vicious come to be popular, and regarded, if not with positive commendation, at least without any abhorrence, because associated with certain pleasing feelings or beneficial results which have flowed from them. All this does not show, as Hume would argue, that virtue consists in utility; it merely shows that *a strong feeling of utility*, like a strong feeling of passion, may influence the moral faculty, and make it pronounce a sentence which it would not have pronounced had it not been so biassed.

But reprobating, as we ever must, these perversions of our moral nature, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that they have been overruled in many cases so as to bind communities together. Every man complains of the influence which fortune, and even custom and fashion, exercise upon the moral sentiments; and we would not complain of these complaints; they originate in the moral sense, and they tend most effectually to check a flagrant sin. But while the influence of such baser considerations upon the sentiments which should be elevated far above them is in itself evil, it may become the occasion of good. A high tone of moral sentiment in a community, it is true, might have been the cause of infinitely greater good; still the good which can be brought out of that which is in itself evil, is patent to all. Adam Smith* has a whole chapter on the final cause of that irregularity in man's nature, by which fortune comes to influence our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation. " Everybody agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our sentiments with regard to the

merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our sentiments are scarce, in one instance, exactly conformable to what this equitable maxim would direct." This very irregularity, he proceeds to show, has promoted the welfare of the species; he should have said, in the absence of higher principle, has been the occasion of good. " Man must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind,

* Moral Sentiments, P. ii. sect. ii.